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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3173
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO PRIORITY 0094
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RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0035

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 000184

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/09/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BK](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: GREECE/BOSNIA: FORMAL REQUEST TO SUPPORT
CANDIDACY OF ALEXANDROS MALLIAS AS HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

REF: SPECKHARD/JONES E-MAIL OF 2/6/09

Classified By: DCM Deborah McCarthy for 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) In a February 10 meeting at his request with Pol-Mil Chief, Haris Lalacos, Director of the MFA All Directorate for Common Foreign and Security Policy, formally requested that the USG support the candidacy of Greek Ambassador to the United States, Alexandros P. Mallias, to serve as the EU Special Representative(EUSR) /High Representative in Bosnia. Lalacos provided a CV (e-mailed to EUR/SE and EUR/SCE), and emphasized that Mallias brings extensive qualifications for the position, having spent most of his career working on Balkans issues. Lalacos emphasized that Greece had "carefully thought through" the issue of having a Greek serve in this position. Mallias is know to be "balanced," and had "been in the forefront of those in the Ministry who moved Greek foreign policy to a greater balance in the region." Lalacos said that it was Greece's assessment that Mallias would be "easily accepted" by all three Bosnian communities as EUSR/High Representative.

¶2. (C) Lalacos noted that the GOG is making a similar request of all EU member states -- although in cases "like the UK" that also have candidates, Greece is simply "informing" them of Mallias' candidacy -- and with "key members" of the PIC Steering Board. Lalacos underscored that Greece knows there are other candidates for the position, but said Greece "hopes" that the international community will take into account the fact that some of those candidates come from countries that have have already had one of their nationals serve as High Representative.

¶3. (C) Finally, Lalacos said that the timing on the decision on the designation of a candidate as EUSR will come quickly. EU High Representative has called candidates to Brussels "the end of this week" for interviews, and Greece understands that the EU will choose its EUSR (who would subsequently be approved by the PIC to be dual-hatted as High Representative for Bosnia) at the February 23 GAERC.

¶4. (C) Pol-Mil Chief responded that he had no instructions on the matter, but would report this request back to Washington. He noted that in an earlier conversation with the MFA Secretary General, Ambassador Speckhard had suggested that Greece proceed carefully on this issue, as there are concerns that appointing a Greek to this position may be negatively seen by some of the Bosnian communities.
SPECKHARD